

**UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
WASHINGTON**

April 7, 2015

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD (ISAB)**

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference – ISAB Study on P5 Plus Strategic Stability

The International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) is requested to undertake a high-level review of the political and policy related barriers to convening strategic stability talks among the P5 plus India and Pakistan, and recommend strategies for structuring and advancing such talks within the P5 Plus.

Strategic stability includes interrelated topics such as extended deterrence, the impact of further nuclear reductions, regional political and military contexts, the role of missile defenses, and the influence of long-range conventional strike systems. The United States has held strategic stability discussions with Russia, and is beginning to raise the subject with China. The United States also has chaired a series of P5 Plus talks (including India and Pakistan) that were primarily focused on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty; however, this group has not convened for over a year. A number of barriers to such talks exist, including political resistance, legal, and policy barriers related to the NPT, a lack of an agreed understanding of what constitutes strategic stability within the post-Cold War international system, and the need for greater analytic attention. The establishment of a multilateral strategic stability discussion structure, in effectively encouraging engagement among India, Pakistan and the P5 would increase understanding of strategic stability across this grouping, again called “the P5 Plus”.

It would be of great assistance if the ISAB could examine and assess as an introductory matter:

- conceptual frameworks for extending strategic stability beyond the U.S.-Russia cold war construct to include the P5, India and Pakistan; these may include considering the application of game theory approaches to P5 Plus strategic stability;

- the potential structure of strategic stability talks for the P5 Plus; this may include consideration of how to handle legitimate policy concerns regarding interactions between the NPT nuclear weapons states and non-parties;
- solutions to overcome both political and policy barriers and provide incentives, particularly with India and Pakistan, to convene P5 Plus talks.

Materials produced in this introductory examination and assessment of the issues could then be used by the Department and interagency to consider the launch of a multilateral strategic stability dialogue among the P5, India, and Pakistan. The goal of such discussions would be to develop and enrich the environment for future formal negotiations of arms reduction and control measures.

During its conduct of the study, the ISAB, as it deems necessary, may expand on the tasks listed above. I request that you complete the study in 270 days. Completed work should be submitted to the ISAB Executive Directorate no later than January 2016.

The Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security will sponsor the study. The Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance will support the study. Michael Edinger will serve as the Executive Secretary for the study and Chris Herrick will represent the ISAB Executive Directorate.

The study will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of P.L. 92-463, the Federal Advisory Committee Act. If the ISAB establishes a working group to assist in its study, the working group must present its report of findings to the full ISAB for consideration in a formal meeting, prior to presenting the report or findings to the Department.



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